



# NEWS RELEASE

## Office of Representative Bob Thorpe

ARIZONA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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**Rep. Bob Thorpe, R-Flagstaff (Dist. 6)**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **TAKING INVENTORY OF STATE LANDS TAKEN BY FEDS**

STATE CAPITOL, PHOENIX (Feb. 14, 2014) – Rep. Bob Thorpe is sponsoring legislation that will audit state lands taken by the federal government since Arizona became a state, including national monuments designated under the Antiquities Act of 1906.

House Bill 2700 begins the process of identifying, inventorying, monitoring and reporting to the Legislature state lands taken by the federal government in the past and going forward.

“This legislation is not concerned with national parks, tribal land or military installations,” Thorpe said. “It is aimed at identifying and pushing back against federal land grabs, like the 100,000 acres taken by the Clinton administration when a few hundred acres would have achieved the same goal.”

A large percentage of lands in Arizona are currently held by the federal government, about 83 percent, said Rep. Thorpe.

“That amount of state land under federal control is unacceptable,” Rep. Thorpe said. “It deprives communities across the state of property tax revenues needed to fund education.”

The impact of these takings will be magnified, added Rep. Thorpe, as the feds work to change the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) formula to reduce federal payments to communities and counties that bear the brunt of these takings.

Last year Arizona received more than \$36 million from the federal government under the PILT program. At present, funding for the PILT program has not been reauthorized for federal fiscal year 2014, which will end Sept. 30, 2014. Consequently, payments for 2014 that occur each October are not scheduled to take place.

The legislation was assigned Feb. 12 to the House Federalism and Fiscal Responsibility Committee.

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